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This speech presents an overview of clusters of career-choice theories, indicates decision making strategies that could be enlisted within each theory cluster, and relates information dispensing processes appropriate to decision making. It is illustrated that regardless of one's propensity towards a career choice theory, affiliation with certain occupational information dispensing strategies, or one's attachment to decision making processes in general; the following conditions exist: (1) all choice making in life is based upon preassumptions that must be identified by counselors and assimilated by counselors. (2) effective counseling designed to assist in career-choice must include more relationships with counselors in group settings and with noncounselors in "exploratory" situations. (3) information presented to counselees from the framework of being the "private truth" possessed by the counselor places a strain on the counseling relationship that is unnecessary and that inhibits understanding and utilization of the information. (Author/LS)

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THE RELEVANCE OF OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION TO CAREER-CHOICE THEORY AND DECISION MAKING

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My goal is to present an overview of clusters of career-choice theories, indicate decision-making strategies that could be enlisted within each theory-cluster, and to relate information-dispensing processes appropriate to decision-making.

I hope to develop sufficient background positions to illustrate that regardless of one's propensity towards a career-choice theory, or one's affiliation with certain occupational information dispensing strategies, or one's attachment to inchoate decision-making processes in general, three necessary conditions underlie all positions, attachments, and processes. Those conditions are:

1) all choice-making in life is based upon pre-assumptions; this implies that these pre-assumptions need to be identified by us and assimilated by the counselees prior to the development of more conscious-level, rational-level assumptions, and before information based upon such conscious assumptions becomes relevant and behavior-modifying.
2) effective counseling strategies designed to assist in career-choice making must include collaborative relationships with counselors in other settings and with non-counselors who have, are, or can influence the counselee or provide situations in which this influence will occur; this implies less privacy

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and less confidentiality and more group work and the manipulation of exploratory experiences.

3) information presented to counselees from the framework of being the private-truth possessed by the counselor places a strain on the counseling relationship that is unnecessary and inhibits the understanding and utilization of the information.

Picture with me the statistician's bell-shaped curve. At the extreme right--perhaps with political symbolism, too--could be placed the Attribute-Matching (you know, trait-and-factor) model of career decision-making. This could be sensed as the mathematical model. At this extreme we would hear about the respect and dignity of all work. The baseline information is that of the work done and the existing workers who do the tasks. Choice-making is perceived as a "free-will" possibility and as rational.

Attribute-matching processes can be improved. For example, ability and achievement testing machines can provide better and more timely data. The GATB in many aspects could be administered by an electronic machine. The positive results would include instant reinforcement, individual involvement (no other person needs to be present), item difficulty control and analyses, speed-of-response and pattern-of-response data can be obtained, reduction of pressure from the group of others being tested with a reduction of distractions, the psychological value of a finished task (for example, rather than leaving items undone and knowing it, when the time had expired

for a sub-section, the machine's screen-viewer would go dark and the test-taker would not know whether he had omitted one or ten items), a greater chance for representing the items as being culturally-fair by avoiding the two-dimensional paper-and-pencil test materials that cause some shock to some applicants, the concentration value of single-item exposure thereby not becoming overwhelmed with the more difficult items ahead, consistency of administration, an automated interpretation instantly available, and the psychological feeling of release from the control of the person of the test administrator with the resultant depersonalization of the scores.

Occupational information, too, can be depersonalized by mechanical retrieval systems now being developed and tested. Maryland's "Job Bank," as reported by Don Aiken, is an example of computerized information based upon the D.O.T.

The information input, by DOT categories (both for the first 3 digits--for one type of information, and last 3 digits for another type of information system) lends itself to depersonalization on the one hand and currency, readability, and impact on the other. Such currently-valid occupational information is of much greater benefit to adult counselees choosing <u>now</u> then it would be for youngsters who are trying to project themselves into a future wherein such information as we now possess may cause premature occupational foreclosure (Borow) based upon the implication that such information will be valid in the future.

Next, and to the left of the extreme right position, would be the Probable Gain model (cf, Hilton, 1962). This could be sensed as the economist's model and does deal with rational behavior. The choice process is to maximize gain, or expected value, and minimize loss. The degree of effort, or Horatio Algerism, is a key.

The Calvinistic orientation to work tends to be associated here; if our grandparents wanted a neighborhood party, they called it a barn-raising to give it a work connotation and justification--their grandchildren, who don't have barns to raise, just go to conventions for their excuse to have a party and call it work.

Again, decision-making is seen as rational and with free-will possibilities. Decision-theory (Schlaifer, 1959) and decision rules (McDonald, 1965) may be helpful to the counselor within this model. The idea is that a counselee has several possible "alternatives" or choides of action. In each of them, certain "events" can occur. In career-choice, these events can be earning $6.00 per hour, having an 8 to 5 job, having security of employment, etc. Each of these events has a "value" for the individual counselee. Such values can be appraised through some form of psychological scaling (Metfessel, 1947). Each event has also had associated with it a probability of its occurrence which can be estimated through actuarial prediction. The decision rule is a principle to be used in selecting among the alternatives when the probability and value estimates are known. If, for each course of action (becoming a butcher), the value (200 value points out of a total of 1,000 value points) of each event ($6.00 per hour) is multiplied by its

probability (70 per cent), and if these products are summed for each career-choice, then the sound decision from this point of view would be for the counselee to choose the job in which the sum of these "expected" values is the greatest.

Let's say he has 1,000 value points to distribute:

TABLE I
Calculations for Choice of Occupation

	Career-Choice Butcher			Career-Choice Chef		
Event	Value	Prob-ability	Expected Value	Value	Prob-ability	Expected Value
$6.00 hr.	200	x 0.70	140.00	200	x 0.60	120.00
8-5 hours	150	x 0.20	30.00	150	x 0.05	7.50
Security	300	x 0.80	240.00	300	x 0.50	150.00
Sum:			410.00			277.50

The value determinations could be developed in a counseling relationship; the probability data could be derived in an information-advisement relationship. (cf, Katz, 1966, and Hills, 1964).

One difficulty, of course, is that our reported values are often not our manifest values; one operating from a phenomenological base of theory would state that manifest values are the only real self. If our manifest values are acted out due to role-model expectations for "other directed" counselees, then we are swinging over the hump--which we call the mean, median and mode--to the left-half (again, there may

be some political symbolism represented) of the bell-shaped image to the Social Structure Model.

This model can be attached to the sociologists. Like the Probable Gain Model, this cluster of career-choice theories relates to decision-making; herein the decisions are anchored on social values, costs of membership (attachment to one group as opposed to another), and the number of pathways in the environment that are open to him. Handling a large amount of information about a large number of alternatives is not likely--from this point of view--to be a major perceived problem of the counselee. To restate, individuals are seen here as being "other-directed" and role-modeling is a key concept. Choice-making herein is seen as intuitive and from the view point of determinism.

This could be the Elwood P. Dowd, or People-who-need-people (even if it's a rabbit named Harvey) category.

Wilensky (1961) studied a group of 600 white male adults, ranging in age from 21 to 55, whom he described as being in the middle mass (i.e., at the upper-working and lower-middle class level), and analyzed their work history in relation to their social participation. He defined the latter in terms which embrace a major aspect of Maslow's need for belongingness: which is the participation in formal civic, and personal-social activities. Wilensky concluded that in this group orderly careers went with social participation, and that "chaotic experience in the economic order fosters a retreat from both work and the larger communal life." He asserts a specific sequence of cause and effect, namely that

an orderly career leads to social participation, on the basis of his findings that earlier socialization and environmental forces appeared not related to later work history. What a blow for determinism.

Miller (1956) found in a group of college students that of those who valued security or prestige the most, about half had failed to make any career choice; whereas, of those who valued belonging the most, only 20 per cent had failed to make career choices. The valuing of belonging and supportive experiences giving a feeling of belonging are best staged through group processes. Privacy, a middle-class invented value, may not be necessary for much career-development-counseling work.

Much of the research in group process indicates that group methods are as efficient as individual counseling methods in such matters as realism of vociational choice, test interpretation understanding, and self-acceptance. When accompanied with individual counseling, group counseling is superior for nearly all criteria that could be envisioned by employment service professionals.

In the sociological model, or the "Birds of a Feather" theory, the concepts of sponsorship are crucial. In one recent study, job-finders (not to be confused with job-seekers) found that the use of friends and relatives to be twice as effective in gaining employment as either the use of direct company application or the use of the Employment Service. The use of the ES and the direct application were found to be about eleven times as effective in gaining employment as the use of newspaper ads. Even among union members, the use of friends and relatives was the most effective way. When asked the "best way" to get a job, however, the job-finders listed direct company application and the use of the ES as the most important

and these two forms were tied for the top place. A very poor third choice was the use of friends and relatives. THEREFORE, friends and relatives were used effectively, but we don't want to admit it. (Sheppard and Belitsky, 1966)

Other types of sponsorship (consciousness of kind, perpetuation of tradition, commensalative and symbiotic), are all social-group centered to insure that loyalties and relationships at work are within a group that shares like orientations (Zralek, 1967). The information aspects, therefore, would deal with values, attitudes, and interrelationships among the expected work-group to which one is presenting himself. Such role-model identification by young male adults, according to Bell (1969), is increasingly independent (compared with the adolescent years) of their father's role-model influence. In other words, we have evidence that indicates the male in his mid-twenties can and does socially-define himself in terms of models unrelated to the father-influence. Another blow for determinism.

At about this time the typical young male may be saying, "I'm a little teapot, short and stout, here is my handle, here is...My God, I'm a sugar bowl!" (he now is able to redefine himself in the social order).

To obtain role-models, we need to take people <u>to</u> the models--in the model's setting. Particularly is this true for the ghetto youngster and young adult. To bring the models to them means that the worker-model is defeated already because the learner is still in the environmental press that <u>he</u> knows and he cannot make the mental leap to try to picture another environment, that of the worker-model.

Decision-making in the Social Structure model is heavily weighted by fear of social failure. Burnstein (1963), among others, finds that as fear of failure increased, the prestige of aspired-to occupations decreased and the willingness to settle for less satisfying and less prestigeful occupations increased.

Risk-taking behaviors, from this orientation, would be undertaken with greater frequency and success expectations if one was a secure member of a social group--a group who would provide the same relationships to this member regardless of his experimentation and exploration in various job role-modeling investigations. I have reported in our journal a five-item social-rating scale that is a better predictor of academic achievement than standard IQ-type measurements. These five items all relate to one's acceptance of and by others. (Bailey, 1967)

To the extreme left of our configuration are the Need-Reduction models. These are in province of the psychologists' orientation. Dynamic personality theories are associated here. The process is to reduce need-tension; this process causes individuals to seek out or gravitate to those occupations which satisfy their needs. To the extent that conscious decision-making goes on, a rare position at the extreme left, the individual appraises his own needs and estimates the need-reducing value of some set of alternatives. Teaching, for example, may attract some for needs to nurture, some for expressing dominance, and some for safety. At this extreme we would hear about the respect and dignity of all workers. This does make more sense to me; people have dignity, not work. Again, choice-making is seen as deterministically

pre-destined and intuitive.

Walter Mitty-like, there are elements of fantasy-wish and narcissism involved here. Unlike Walter Mitty, however, the true fulfillment of man from this point of view involves acceptance of one's unique self to the point that dream-escape to other characterizations is unnecessary. Decision-making from this cluster is the implementation of a self-concept, which means that information about the self is the developmental requirement, not information about the environment.

You will recall that I mentioned at the beginning that there are a series of pre-assumptions about career-choice making that need to be identified. These pre-assumptions fall into the clusters of theory that have been referred to above. The right, or rational, side of the diagram implies "free will," but this individual freedom of "changing into" is in the province of the human manipulators; the left, or affective, side of our design implies "determinism," but this cumulative "growth from" is represented by the domains of the human liberators. The only common-ground for the resolution of such philosophical dilemmas is the establishment of acceptable baseline orientations.

These baseline orientations would be in the form of pre-assumptions from which decision-making behaviors can be developed. To cause developing understanding and acceptance of the messages of the pre-assumptions requires the active support of counselors in all settings, and collaborative relationships with non-counselors who influence or provide situational influences for the counselee. To imprint the pre-assumption understandings, group processes and social-value exploratory experiences must be provided.

What are some career development concepts that have sufficient support from the profession that we have begun to neglect them to the point that they truly could be classed as pre-assumptions?

The prime need of understanding prior to choice-making in careers, according to the trustees of professional associations interested in career choice activities, is this one:

> We all have widely different make-ups; endowments of traits, of ability or disability, of attitudes and aspirations, of social compatibility.

The message, of course, is individual differences in all components of life and persons. Here is support for the attribute-matching proponents, but the concepts are acceptable to all other models.

The second valued career development concept is:

> The degree of satisfaction an individual obtains from his life work is proportionate to the degree to which it enables him to implement his self-concept and to satisfy his outstanding needs.

The message here, of course, is the need-reduction model. This is the area of "I am," "I can," "I will or will not," and "I should" statement. Data, such as that adults with high need-achievement have extremely better perceptions of the changes in their lives for the previous five years and projections for the future five years than other adults with average or low need-achievement, are accepted by nearly all serious theoreticians. In this need-achievement area, additionally, high need achievers perceive the present more accurately, identify the attributes of a good occupation

with greater specificity, tend to place the blame for personal failure on themselves, and to value mastery. Interestingly, there is no apparent difference among the scoring categories of need-achievement measurement in terms of the values placed upon the importance of hard work. (USOE, 1966).

Another pre-assumption, probably in the camp of the Social-Structure adherents, would be:

> To work with a congenial group, to be an intrinsic part of the functioning of the group, to be needed and welcomed by the group, are important aspects of the satisfactory job.

For all who accept this concept, and the research is overwhelmingly supportive of the conclusions, they must concurrently accept the need for group processes in developing the imprinting of this baseline concept as necessary for future decision-making behaviors.

A pre-assumption fitting into the Probable-Gain or economist's position would be:

> The major motivation to work for a majority is to achieve or maintain a standard of living which they consider appropriate to themselves.

Because the phrase "appropriate to themselves" is central to this concept, sufficient flexibility is involved that proponents of all positions can incorporate this pre-assumption into their position.

A listing of many career-development concepts sorted by the categories of careery-theory has been derived and recently reported. (Bailey, 1968)

Until we can identify our bedrock beliefs (and support them by research) and share them among counselors in all settings, it will continue to be

difficult to communicate with each other. Moreoever, it will be impossible to orchestrate a series of developmental exploratory experiences for our counselees; experiences that will lead them to incorporate these assumptions as a personally relevant baseline from which to receive occupational information and engage in productive decision-making. Let's ecumenicalize.

All positions have something to gain and all have something to give. To close with a Willard Wirtz anecdote: a third-grade teacher was going to help his pupils with vocational-choice understandings. To do this, he was going to have them come to the front of the room and tell the class what they wanted to be when they grew up. ("to be is the wrong question anyway; "to do" is the productive stimulus).

The first to go to the front of the class was Sam, and he said, "My name is Same, and I'd like to be a mechanic if I can, and I think I can." The teacher nodded approvingly, thought of the Probable-Gain model, and called the next child.

"My name is Sadie, and I want to be a lady and have a baby if I can, and I think I can." The teacher thought that this was a proper goal within the Social Structure model and thanked the child.

A boy jumped to the front of the room without being called and blurted out, "My name is Dan, and I don't have a plan, but I could help Sadie with her plan, and I think I can." When needs are so manifest, let's reduce them. Your needs are for my closure.

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